

A
S E R M O N
ON THE
GLORIOUS KINGDOM
OF
CHRIST upon EARTH,
OR THE
MILLENNIUM.

Preached at CHRIST-CHURCH, *Dublin*,
on the Second *Sunday* in ADVENT, 1747.

By ROBERT HORT, A. M.
Rector of *Temple Michael*, and Chaplain to his
Grace, JOSIAH, Lord Archbishop of *Tuam*.

He that hath Ears to hear let him hear, Mat. xiii. 43.

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

HAVING in the following Sermon insisted chiefly on the Proofs of *Christ's Kingdom upon Earth*, and occasionally only on the Renovation of the World, I shall in this Preface speak more at large of the Renovation. And if in the Prosecution of this Subject I should happen to offer some of the same Arguments that are already urged in the Sermon, as it is probable I may, for these things do mutually infer each other, I hope to be forgiven.

We read in the third Chapter of *Genesis*, that God pronounced the following Curse upon *Adam*, and upon the Creation, in consequence of his Transgression: *Because thou hast hearkened to the Voice of thy Wife, and hast eaten of the Tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it: Cursed is the Ground for thy Sake; in Sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the Days of thy Life;*

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Thorns

Thorns also and Thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the Herb of the Field. In the Sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat Bread, till thou return unto the Ground, for out of it wast thou taken, for Dust thou art, and unto Dust shalt thou return.

Hence arose the Necessity of a Redeemer, to repair the Loss sustained by the Fall of Adam, and to obliterate the Curse. Accordingly all those who acknowledge Christ to be the promised Redeemer, expect to be restored to Happiness and Immortality through his Mediation. But there are few who have observed, that the Redemption ought to extend to the *natural* as well as the *moral* World; and that the Creation as it fell with Man must also be *restored* with him, and yet this, as far as I can judge, is agreeable both to Reason and Revelation. If indeed the Hypothesis were true, which is *now* generally received, for formerly it was not so, viz. that the World shall go on in it's ordinary Course till the second Coming of Christ, and that he shall then summon before him the whole Race of Mankind, the Quick and the Dead, and shall conclude the great Assize in the short Space of a natural Day; condemning the Wicked to everlasting Torments, and causing the virtuous to be translated into Heaven, that is, into some happy Place



Place that is above us, for we have no very distinct Notion of it; and that the Earth shall be then consumed by Fire: If this Hypothesis, I say, were true, there could be no Reason assigned for delivering the Creation from *the Bondage of Corruption*. But I confess, tho' I have no Pleasure in departing from *received* Opinions, that I am not satisfied with *this*.

That the World shall continue to be a Scene of Wickedness and Disorder; (as it has ever been since the Fall) till the second Coming of *Christ*, I can readily allow, for so long the Powers of Darkness shall prevail. But that the *Destruction* of Antichrist, the *Resurrection* of the Dead, which shall not be instantaneous and at once, as is supposed, but in *Order*, as *St. Paul* teaches, (a) the *Judgment* of Angels, and of the whole Race of Mankind; that these things, which do all of them appertain to our *Lord's* second Coming, shall be transacted in the short Space of a *natural* Day is somewhat too hard for me to conceive. It matters not that the time of our *Lord's* second *Advent* is called *the Day of Judgment* in the holy Scriptures, because a *Day* in the Scripture Language, as *Mr. Mede* has observed, is ordinarily

(a) 1 Cor. xv. 23.

ordinarily used for *Tempus*, yea *longissimum*, and of this he gives many Instances. He has also remarked of the *Day of Judgment* in particular, that the *Jews*, from whom our *Lord* and his Disciples borrowed this Expression, never understood thereby but a time of many Years Continuance, yea some, says he, (*mirabile dictu*) of a thousand Years. (b) But further, our blessed *Lord* shall possess a glorious Kingdom upon Earth together with his Saints, and that too at his second Coming, and it can hardly be supposed that this glorious Kingdom shall begin and end in the Space of a *natural Day*. That this Kingdom, heavenly on account of it's Author, and of the Righteousness and Felicity of it's Subjects, shall yet be an *earthly Kingdom* with respect to it's Seat is plain from hence. That the Office of *Christ*, as a Redeemer, relates to *this World* only. For this Purpose he was manifested that he might destroy the Works of the Devil, (c) which prevail no where but upon the *Earth*, and the Dominion of the Devil, who is the Prince of this World. (d)

The Kingdom of *Christ*, if we may distinguish it from that of the *Father*, is the Kingdom

(b) Mede's Works, Pag. 772.
(d) John xvi. 11.

(c) 1 John iii. 8.

Kingdom of a Viceroy sent and commissioned by the Father to rescue this World from the Power of an Usurper, and to reclaim his rebellious Subjects to their Obedience; which when he has done, his Commission, if I may so speak, is at an End. *He must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet. But when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall he deliver up the Kingdom to God even the Father; then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* (e) The Kingdom of Christ therefore relates to this World only, since at the End of the World the Kingdom belongeth solely to God even the Father, and it is here consequently that he must reign in Glory with his Saints. Behold this reasoning confirmed, if it stand in need of Confirmation, by the express Words of the Prophet *Daniel*.

The Kingdom and Dominion and Greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heavens shall be given to the People of the Saints of the most high, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all Dominions (under the whole Heaven) shall serve and obey him. Ch. vii. 27. I said likewise — that this Kingdom shall commence at the second Coming of our

Lord, *since then our Lord shall be blessed for ever at his second Coming.* (e) 1 Cor. xv.

Lord; and this appears from the 13th Verse
 of the same Chapter: *I saw in the Night
 Visions, and beheld one like the Son of Man
 came with the Clouds of Heaven — and there
 was given him Dominion and Glory and a
 Kingdom, that all People, Nations and Lan-
 guages should serve him; and from this Saying
 of St. Paul, the Lord Jesus shall judge the Quick
 and the Dead at his Appearing and his King-
 dom, 2 Tim. iv. 1. And from the Promise of
 our Lord to his Disciples, Luke xxii. 29. I
 appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father
 hath appointed unto me: that ye may eat and
 drink at my Table in my Kingdom, and sit on
 Thrones judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.
 From the first of these Texts we learn, that
 our Lord shall take Possession of his glorious
 Kingdom, when he cometh in the Clouds
 of Heaven; and from the two last that the
 glorious Kingdom of Christ is cotemporary
 with the Day of Judgment. But the Day
 of Judgment is at the second Coming of
 Christ, and then consequently his glorious
 Kingdom commences. And if his Kingdom
 shall commence at his second Coming, it
 cannot but be a Kingdom upon Earth. The
 Truth is, when our Lord sitteth on the
 Throne of his Glory with his Saints in Judg-
 ment, he then sitteth in the actual Exercise
 of his regal Authority. Since then our
 blessed Lord, at his second Coming, shall
 destroy*

destroy the Powers of Darkness, shall raise the Dead in their Order, shall rule the Nations of the Earth, and shall cause his Saints at the same time to rejoice with him in his Kingdom, it must needs be that his Kingdom shall be an earthly Kingdom with respect to the Seat of it ; and also that it shall be of a long Duration ; for to suppose that all these Things shall be accomplished in a *natural* Day, or in a short Space of time, is beyond Measure absurd. His Kingdom ends, it is certain, with the general Resurrection, as it begins at his second *Advent*. There must therefore be a considerable Interval between the second Coming of our *Lord*, and the general Resurrection. St. *John* says expressly in the 20th Ch. of the *Apocalypse*, that the Reign of *Christ* with his Saints, as the *Jews* do of the Kingdom of the *Messiah*, shall continue for a thousand Years. And as it appears from other Passages of holy Writ, that the Saints shall partake of the blessed Kingdom of *Christ*, which commences at his second Coming, *eating and drinking at his Table, in his Kingdom*, as our *Lord* himself expresses it ; and *shall sit with him on Thrones of Glory judging the twelve Tribes of Israel, judging the World also, and Angels*, according to St. *Paul*, (f) we may

B

observe

(f) 1 Cor. vii. 3. iii. 22. (g) 2e. xix. 11. (h)

observe by the Way, that the Resurrection of the *Just* must of Necessity be prior to the *general* Resurrection, as *St. John* has also expressly taught.

But to return. Since the glorious and blessed Kingdom of *Christ* and his Saints shall continue upon Earth a thousand Years, it will follow, that the Earth as it was cursed for the Sin of *Adam*, shall be restored to it's primitive Perfection, thro' the Merit and Power of *Christ*, and for the Sake of the Just; unless you will suppose, that *God* is more ready to punish than to reward. In it's present State it is an unfit Place for the glorious Kingdom of *Christ*, and the Happiness of the Saints.

See this Reasoning also confirmed by the express Declaration of *Christ* and his Apostles. There shall be, say they, a *Regeneration*, (g) a *Restoration of all things* (h) and a *Deliverance of the Creation from the Bondage of Corruption, under which it now groaneth*; and that too; which is exceedingly remarkable to our Purpose, *At the time when Christ shall reign with his Saints, at his second Coming, and when the Sons of God shall regain their Liberty.*

From

(g) *Matt. xix. 28.*

(h) *Act. iii. 21. Rom. viii. 21.*

From hence it is (and it cannot otherwise be accounted for) that the Prophets of the *Old Testament*, the *Psalmist* in particular, call upon the whole Creation, Creatures animate and inanimate, to celebrate with Joy and Songs of Triumph the Coming of the *Lord* to reign over, and to judge the World. *Let the Heavens rejoice, and let the Earth be glad: let the Sea roar and the Fulness thereof: let the Field be joyful and all that is therein. Then shall all the Trees of the Woods rejoice before the Lord. For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the Earth: He shall judge the World with Righteousness and the People with his Truth. The Lord reigneth let the Earth rejoice, let the Multitude of the Isles be glad, Psal. xcvi.*

There ought to be, according to this reasoning, some Part of the Earth happy in a peculiar Manner, as Paradise was in the original World, that the Restoration of all things may be complete, and in this Point also the holy Scriptures declare on our Side. For the new *Jerusalem*, which bears a Relation to the Earth, and does not mean Heaven, as is commonly supposed, has all the Characteristics of the original Paradise, as is shewn in the following Discourse.

The *Jews* have a Notion that the original Paradise doth still subsist in some Region above us, and that *Enoch* and *Elias* and the Souls of Men, who were in their Lives eminent for Virtue, are there : (i) Hence their kind Wish for the dying or dead Person, may his Soul be in Paradise. This Notion of their's, strange as it may seem, (for what is there relating to this Subject that will not appear strange, at least to them who are unaccustomed to Speculations of this Sort) receives some Confirmation from our Lord's Promise to the penitent Thief : *This Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise* ; (k) and from St. Paul's having been caught up into Paradise, (l) and from the the 7th ver. of the chap. ii. of the *Apocalypse* : *He that hath an Ear, let him hear what*

— (i) Comperimus in libro *Hanochi*, Deum illi, postquam sustulisset eum in sublime, et ostendisset ei omnes thesauros superiores, & inferiores, monstrasse etiam arborem vitæ, & arborem illam quam interdixerat *Adamo* ; & vidit locum *Adami* in paradiso, in quo si *Adamus* observasset præceptum illud, vixisset perpetuo, & in æternum mansisset. *Menasseh Ben-Israel*, lib. 3. De resurrect. mortuorum, cap. xi.

It is observable that many of the ancient Fathers, speaking of the Place where *Enoch* and *Elias* are, call it the terrestrial Paradise, and *Irenæus* says from the Disciples of the Apostles, " that they who are translated, are translated thither," vid. *Iren.* lib. v. cap. 5.

(k) *Luke* xxiii. 43.

(l) 2 *Cor.* xii. 4.

what the Spirit saith unto the Churches. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the Midst of the Paradise of God.

Now supposing Paradise to subsist in some Region above us (as it must do if it subsist at all, for St. *Paul* was caught up into Paradise) it may be expected that it shall descend from thence at the second Coming of *Christ*. Accordingly St. *John* represents the new *Jerusalem*, which has all the Characteristicks of the original Paradise, coming down from God out of Heaven, at the Renovation of all things, enlightened by his Glory. (m)

I have ventured to offer these Conjectures to the Consideration of the Reader, being of Opinion with the excellent Mr. *Mede*, that unless we are permitted to think freely, and even to *err* in Matters of this Sort, we shall never be able to discover the Truth. (n) The Reader is at Liberty to reject them if he thinks fit. The Point I have undertaken to prove stands in no Need of them for a Support, it being made plain, as I think, in the following Discourse, that the *Jerusalem* which shall descend from Heaven, at the Renovation

(m) *Apo. xxi. 2.*

(n) Pagi 435 nisi in hisce talibus liberius paulo sentiendi, imo & errandi venia concedatur, &c.

novation of all things, shall be, if it be not the *original* Paradise, analogous to it, and equal to it in Happiness.

To obviate the Charge of *Novelty* which may perhaps be brought against the foregoing Doctrine, (tho' it is so plainly taught in the holy Scriptures) and which may prejudice some People against it; I shall briefly show, that it was received by the antient *Heathen* Nations, by the *Jews*, and by the whole *Christian* Church in it's earliest and purest Ages.

That the *Romans* believed the World to have been perfect at its first Creation, to have fallen from that State of Perfection, and that at length there would be a Restoration of the Golden Age, as they called the first Age of the World, is plain from the fourth Eclogue of *Virgil*, who describes the Renovation both of the physical and moral World, in a manner very little differing from that of the sacred Writings.

That the same Notions prevailed among the *Grecians* appears from *Plato's* Dialogue which bears the Title of *Politicus*. The Philosopher having there spoken of the first happy Condition of the World and its Fall, adds. But in the End, lest the World should

should be plunged in an eternal Abyss of Confusion, God, the Author of the primitive Order will appear again, and resume the Reins of Empire. Then he will *change, embellish and restore* the whole Frame of Nature, and put an End to Decay of Age, Sickness and Death.

Plutarch having related the Doctrine of the antient *Persians* concerning the Evil introduced into the World by *Arimanius*, concludes it thus: But there will come a Time appointed by Fate, when *Arimanius* shall be entirely destroyed and extirpated; the Earth shall *change* its Form, and become plain and even; and happy Men shall have one and the same Life, Language and Government.

Lastly, the following are the Theological Principles of the antient *Gymnosophists*, as they are preserved by *Strabo*. Formerly Plenty reigned over all Nature; Milk, Wine, Honey and Oil flowed in a continual Stream from Fountains. But Men having made an ill Use of this Felicity, *Jupiter* deprived them of it, and condemned them to Labour for the Sustainance of their Lives. When Temperance and the rest of the Virtues shall return upon Earth, then the antient Plenty shall be *restored*.

I am

I am obliged to the learned and ingenious Author of the Travels of *Cyrus* for the foregoing Authorities, who has shewn in the Appendix to that Work by some Translations from the *Chinese* Philosophers, that they also entertained the same Notions concerning the Corruption and the future Renovation of the World. And it is well worthy of Notice, that all the Heathen Nations believed, that the Renovation would be brought about by some Divine Hero.

The Agreement there was between the Heathen Nations in these Matters is truly remarkable. The Things themselves are not discoverable by human Reason: And yet they have been received throughout the whole World, and among Nations that had no Communication with each other; consequently they were received before the Dispersion of Mankind; and from divine Revelation. For no Cause less early, or of weaker Influence, could have produced so extraordinary an Effect.

As to the *Jews*, the two following Quotations from *Menasseh Ben-Israel* will show what their Opinion was, and is, concerning the State of the Earth in the Days of the *Messiah*. Having in his Treatise on the Resurrection

furrection of the Dead, (Book iii. Chap. 6.) produced many Authorities from the ancient *Jews*, he adds, Denique, liquet hinc, quod ex veterum opinione, terra isto tempore in meliorem statum restituetur, uti in Beresit Raba idem quoque confirmatur. Quanquam sunt qui arbitrantur, solum terram sanctam isto restitutionis privilegio gavisuram esse : eamque futuram paradysum orbis terrarum.' And in the Fourth Chapter having cited the following Passage from the Seventh Book of *Lactantius*, Dispositione summi Dei sic ordinatum ; ut injustum hoc seculum, decurso temporum spatio, terminum sumat ; extinctaque protinus omni malitia, & piorum animis ad beatam vitam revocatis, quietum, tranquillum, pacificum, aureum denique (ut poetæ vocant) seculum, Deo ipso regnante florescat.' Having cited this Passage he adds, Hic plane se nobiscum sentire ostendit.

The following Remark will not I hope be thought impertinent in this Place, viz. That tho' the *Jews* of our *Saviour's* Time, and even his own Disciples declare plainly their Expectations of an earthly Kingdom, and consequently of the Renovation of the Earth ; yet our Lord does not at any Time blame, or so much as discountenance these Expectations. On the contrary, when his

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Disciples

Disciples enquire concerning the Establishment of an earthly Kingdom, *Acts* i. 6. he allows their Hopes to be just with regard to the Thing it self. But no one sure can suppose, that if they had been indeed mistaken, more especially if the Mistake were of ill Consequence as is often asserted, our Blessed *Lord* would have permitted his Disciples to have continued in it, who were to be the Instructors of the World. The Opinion was a favourite one, and they would naturally teach it *their* Disciples, and by this Means a Foundation would be laid for misleading all succeeding Generations. To say, as it is generally said, that the Apostles after the Descent of the Holy Ghost were more enlightened in this Matter, and were shewn their Mistake is evidently not true. Because St. *John*, the last of the Apostles, has foretold and described the glorious Reign of *Christ* and the Saints in the very same Manner that the *Jews* were wont to describe that of the *Messiah*. (o) And from his personal *Conversation*, as well

(o) Quæ toto hoc capite dicuntur ferè omnia erant in *Judeorum* traditionibus, de duabus resurrectionibus, de mille annis foelicibus inter utramque, &c. *Grotius* in viges. cap. *Apocal.*

Comme les Juifs entendent à la lettre, & d'une maniere charnelle tout ce qui est dit du Messie, & du rétablissement de *Jerusalem* dans les Prophetes, ils ont aussi dans leurs traditions un règne de mille ans sur la terre, ou ils doivent jouir de toutes sortes de prospérités avec leur Messie. Pere *Simon* sur le même, Ch.

as from his *Writings* the primitive Christians derive this Opinion. For *Irenæus*, who lived and conversed with the Apostles immediate Disciples declares, that he learnt it from those Elders who had seen St. *John*, and heard it from his Mouth. (p) And *Justin Martyr* testifies, (q) who lived within thirty Years of St. *John's* Death, that it was in his time received by all true Christians, and denied by none but those who also denied the Resurrection of the dead. These Men are worthy of all Credit, they were Martyrs for the Christian Religion, and I can see no tolerable Reason for rejecting their Testimony. And as it was the Doctrine of the primitive Times that *Christ* should reign upon Earth, so also did they believe that there would be a *Renovation* of the Earth; as witness the following Passages from *Justin Martyr* and *Irenæus*: *Ουτος γάρ ἐστιν ὁ καὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ δι' οὗ ὁ πατὴρ μέλλει καινουργεῖν οὗτος ἐστὶν ὁ ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ αἰώνιον Φῶς λάμπειν μέλλων, ἰ. e.* Hic etenim est (Jesum intelligit) a quo & cœlum & terram factam scimus, & per quem & cœlum & terram pater innovabit. Hic est qui in Jerusalem, ut lux resplendeat sempiterna faciet. *Justinus Martyr* dialogo cum *Tryphone*, pag. 340. Edit. Paris. Oportet justos primos in conditione hac quæ renovatur,

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vatur,

(p) Lib. v. cap. 33.

(q) Dialogo cum *Tryphone*.

vatur, ad apparitionem *Dei* resurgentes recipere promissionem hæreditatis, quam *Deus* promisit patribus, & regnare in ea — Oportet ergo & ipsam conditionem reintegratam ad pristinum, sine prohibitione servire justis; & hoc Apostolus fecit manifestum in ea quæ est ad *Romanos*, sic dicens: *Nam expectatio creaturæ revelationem filiorum Dei expectat, &c. Irenæ. lib. v. cap. 32. Edit. Oxon.* And to the same Purpose *Barnabas*, the Companion of *St. Paul*, speaks in his general Epistle pag. 46, teaching us, that at the End of six thousand Years Wickedness shall be abolished, all Things shall be renewed, we shall receive the promised Inheritance, and celebrate the great Sabbath in Holiness. He also assigns a Reason for the Observation of the eighth Day, namely, because it is a Representation of the eight thousandth Year, when we shall enter upon our eternal Happiness. For, as *Cotelerius* observes on the the Place, *Chiliasæ annos sex mille præsentium statui tribuebant, septimum millenarium assignabant regno Christi cum sanctis suis, Ogdoadem æternæ beatitudini consecrabant.*

The Opinion therefore that I have advanced, which is the Opinion of those who are called *Millenaries*, is far from being *new*, since it is confirmed in Substance by the united Testimony of the ancient *Heathen Nations*,
of

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of the *Jews*, and of the whole *Christian* Church in it's earliest and purest Ages. And if we consider the great Probability there is, that the *Heathen* Nations derived it from some Revelation earlier than the Dispersion of Mankind ; that the *Jews* were a People governed and instructed by Prophets divinely inspired ; that our *Lord* himself allows their Expectations in this Matter to be just ; that the primitive *Christians*, unexceptionable Witnesses in this Case, declare, that they received this Doctrine from the immediate Disciples of St. *John* ; that it is in itself *reasonable*, and even *necessary* in order to render the Redemption from the Curse complete ; that it is taught by many *plain* and *express* Texts of Scripture, which cannot without Violence and Constraint, such as no Man would be allowed to use in the Explanation of any human Writings, be interpreted to any other Purpose ; if these Things are duly considered, it will appear, I think, that the Truth as well as the Antiquity of this Opinion, is sufficiently established ; nor can I see how it possibly could have been established with more Certainty. For if a Multitude of Scripture Texts, understood in their plain and natural Sense, according also to the general Tenor of the Scriptures, and supported by so great an Authority be not a sufficient Proof,

Proof, I am utterly at a Loss to know what is.

Some have asked, Of what Importance is this Doctrine? And that it may not be looked upon as a Matter of curious Speculation only, I shall venture to assert that, if it be revealed by an all-wise *God* in the holy Scriptures, it is impious to doubt of it's Importance, whether we are able at present to discern it or not. But it serves, as I conceive, to set the Scheme of our Redemption in a clear and rational Light; to vindicate the Honour of the holy Scriptures, by explaining many difficult, and reconciling many seemingly inconsistent Texts; and consequently to recommend the *Christian* Religion to the Esteem and Acceptance of every considerate Person. Particularly with regard to the *Jews*, there are no Means more likely to convert them to Christianity than the Acknowledgment of this Doctrine. The Difference between us at present is this: They expect a King in the Person of the *Messiah*, who shall rule over the Earth; but they overlook many Passages in the Prophets, and the Sacrifices ordained by the Law which have evidently foretold his Sufferings. We, on the other hand, believe him to have *suffered*; but we deny that he shall also *reign* upon Earth; and so long as we persist in denying this, so long, says the excellent Mr. Mede,

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as we persist in denying the second Appearance of *Christ* upon Earth, in as glorious a Manner as his first was obscure, we shall hardly be able to convince *Jews* that he is the true promised *Messiah*, because we can give no tolerable Reason, why the Prophecies concerning his Humiliation and Sufferings should be understood in a *literal*, and those of his Exaltation and glorious Reign in a *spiritual* Sense. Here then is a Matter of no small Consequence to which this Doctrine may be subservient.

And, as reconciling the *Jewish* and the *Christian* Churches, or proving that they ought to be reconciled; that the Old and New Testament, tho' written by different Persons, and in very distant Ages, agree together with great Exactness; that our blessed Lord has in Part fulfilled what was foretold of him by the Prophets; and with respect to those Predictions that remain yet to be fulfilled, that he and his Apostles have said no other things than Moses and the Prophets did say should come; I say, as to prove these Things, which I presume may be done by Means of the Doctrine I am supporting, is in effect to prove the Truth of our Religion; I am inclined to hope therefore, that this Doctrine may likewise contribute to the Conversion of *Unbelievers*. And, confirming the Faith, it may consequently improve the Lives

Lives even of those who already *believe*. This was an Effect it had on the excellent Person I have lately mentioned. I find, says he, in one of his private Letters, more true Contentment in the Contemplation of those Things which *God* hath been pleased to reveal to me, than the greatest Dignities which Ambition so hunteth after could ever have afforded me — and I give Thanks to Almighty *God*, who hath made the Light of these his wonderful Mysteries to kindle that Warmth in my Heart which I felt not till I begun to see them; and which have made me that which they found me not. To know in general that we shall be rewarded or punished according to our Works, is not to know as *Christians*, for of this the *Heathens* themselves were not ignorant. It has pleased *God* to preserve in the holy Scriptures the Remembrance of our Fall, and to declare to us both the Method and the Manner of our Restoration: And tho' the Sum of all be, that we shall be rewarded or punished according to our Deserts, yet the *particular* Knowledge of this Matter which we receive from the holy Scriptures, makes it either a new Argument, or gives new Force to it. I may add that this Doctrine will give a deadly Blow to some of the *Popish* Errors, particularly to their *Invocation* of Saints and to the *Infallibility* of their Church, to which last Purpose

the Evangelical Ministry may be said to improve the Truth.

it is urged against them by the excellent Mr. *Chillingworth* at the End of his Works, pag. 33.

Nothing further remains, but to bespeak the Reader's Favour in judging the following Discourse, which not being originally intended for the Press, is written less correctly perhaps than otherwise it would have been. I flatter myself, however, that the Arguments I have made use of will be found to have more Weight, even as they are now disposed, than is generally imagined. If the Reader should think otherwise, yet he cannot but allow, if he be of an ingenuous Disposition, that whoever shall undertake the painful Search after Truth, instead of travelling at Ease in the beaten Road, and shall have Resolution enough to communicate his Thoughts to the Publick, at the Hazard of his Reputation and Interest; that Person, however he be mistaken, deserves at least to be forgiven. *Papists* indeed will condemn his Conduct, who arrogantly pretend to Infallibility; but *Protestants*, who make no such Claim, and who owe the blessed Reformation to the Study of the holy Scriptures in the Way of private Judgment; *Protestants*, I say, ought to consider, if *they* also condemn it, that they will be found to act a very inconsistent Part.

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his Conduct, who arrogantly pretend to In-
fallibility; but I beseech, who make no
such Claim, and who owe the blessed Re-
formation to the Study of the holy Scriptures
in the Way of private Judgment; Protestants
I say, ought to consider, it very also condemn
it, that they will be found to act a very in-
consistent Part.



SERMON, &c.

MATT. VI. 10.

*Thy Kingdom come, thy Will be done,
in Earth as it is in Heaven.*

THE Kingdom of God may be considered in a two-fold Light, as it respects Angels and Men. With respect to Angels, the Heavens, or those Worlds which are above us are the Seat of it: For those, it must be allowed, are the Habitation of Angels, unless you suppose, what is not reasonable, either that intellectual Beings, how vast soever their Number be, and how different soever their Degrees, do all of them inhabit the same World; or that they dwell in uncircumscribed Space. Now if the Heavens are the Habitation of Angels, then do they enjoy there the Kingdom of

God, for they constantly render to God, on their Part, a perfect and willing Obedience, and are made happy, on the other hand, by such Manifestations of the divine Glory as they are severally capable of receiving, and therefore it is, that God, who is every where present, is yet in a peculiar Manner said to dwell in Heaven, and to have his Throne there. But with respect to Men, I can see no Reason why this World of our's should not be the Seat of God's Kingdom, either while it is under the Administration of Christ, or in it's more perfect State, when Christ having put down all Rule and all Authority and Power shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God even the Father, that God may be all in all. There is certainly no Kind of Necessity for our being removed, at any Time, from this our proper World to another, since God can render this World as happy as he pleases, his Presence being infinite, and his Glory capable of being displayed in ten thousand Worlds as well as in one; and in this World of our's as well as in any other Part of the Universe. Besides, if this Removal were to take Place, and we were to be transplanted to some one Part of the Universe, supposed to be happy in a peculiar Manner, our World would then be rendered useless, and a Void be left in God's Works. Nay, on this Supposition, as all other intelli-

gent



gent Creatures, who in the Scale of Beings are superior to us, would have an equal Title, at least, to this one happy Place, all other Parts of the Universe would be deserted. From these Considerations I am inclined to believe, that the Kingdom of God, as it respects *Mankind*, shall even in it's most *perfect* State be enjoyed here. And as far as I can perceive, the holy Scriptures favour this Opinion, for St. Peter tells us, 2 Epist. iii. 13. that, even after the Dissolution of the Elements by Fire, we are to expect *new Heavens and a new Earth wherein dwelleth Righteousness.* (a) This however I have no Doubt of, that the Kingdom of God, so long as it continues under the *Administration of Christ*, shall be enjoyed upon Earth.

Some of the Reasons which persuade me to be of this Opinion are these which follow: In the first Place, we are directed to pray, that the Kingdom of God, meaning the glorious Kingdom of *Christ*, wherein good Men shall begin to receive their Reward, may *come*, that is, if you allow the Expression to be

(a) Conflagratione mundanā elementorum corruptibilium qualitates, quæ corporibus nostris corruptibilibus congruebant, ardendo penitus interibunt; atque ita substantia eas qualitates habebit quæ corporibus immortalibus mirabili mutatione conveniunt; ut scilicet mundus in melius innovatus aptè accomodetur hominibus etiam carne in melius innovatis, Aug. de Civ. Dei, cap. 16.

be proper, not that we may go to the *Heavens*, where the Kingdom of *God* is already perfect; but that this Kingdom may prevail upon *Earth*, that so the Will of *God*, as the next Petition sufficiently explains it, may be done by *Mankind upon Earth as it is by the Angels in Heaven*: Judge, I pray ye, whether this be not the natural Meaning of the Text, and if it be, it will then follow, that the glorious Kingdom of *Christ* shall be enjoyed upon *Earth*; unless you suppose, what is impious to suppose, that we are directed by our blessed *Lord* to hope and pray for what shall never happen.

I observe, 2^{dly}, that the Inheritance of the *Earth* is promised to good Men as their future Reward, than which there cannot be a stronger Confirmation of the foregoing Opinion: *Those that wait upon the Lord they shall inherit the Earth; for yet a little While and the Wicked shall not be, but the Meek shall inherit the Earth, and shall delight themselves in the Abundance of Peace*, Psal. xxxv. 11. These happy Times the World has not yet seen, nor can it see, till the *Lord* shall destroy that *Wicked*, as St. Paul speaks (b) *with the Breath of his Mouth, and shall consume with the Brightness of his Coming*. At the second

(b) 2 *Thess.* ii. 8.

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cond Coming of *Christ* therefore, and not till then, we are to expect the Completion of this Prophecy. Our blessed *Lord* repeats this Promise in the Fifth Chapter of *St. Matthew*, where he is speaking of the future Reward of Virtue: *Blessed are the Meek, for they shall inherit the Earth.* To say, as it is generally said, that Men of a meek and quiet Disposition do actually enjoy at *present* more real Happiness than those of a contrary Temper, however it may be true, is not to the Purpose, since the Promise evidently relates to the *future* Reward of good Men.

The solemn Covenant of *God* comes next to be considered, and perhaps throughout the whole Scripture there is nothing more worthy of Attention. By this Covenant, a Part of the Earth, *viz.* the Land of *Canaan* is promised to *Abraham* and his Seed as their future Inheritance and Reward. The Promise is frequently repeated; it is confirmed by an Oath; it is joined with the Promise of the *Messiah*; and the Land is particularly distinguished.

It appears to me a strange Interpretation of the solemn Covenant of *God*, to say, that nothing more is intended by it than that the Posterity of *Abraham*, some hundred Years after, should possess the Land of *Canaan*.
For

For consider, I intreat you, whether it be a Matter of any real Importance in what Part of the World we are to pass the short Time of our Continuance in it. *Abraham* himself lived always as a *Stranger* and a *Pilgrim*, journeying from Place to Place, and without any settled Habitation. He therefore must have considered the Covenant, if it related only to the temporal Prosperity of his Descendants, as a *mean* Thing: How improperly then is this Promise made to him? how unfitly is it joined with that of the blessed Seed; and above all, how inconsistent is it with the Honour and Majesty of Almighty *God*, and with the Doctrine of the new Testament to speak of temporal Enjoyments with so much Solemnity?— Besides the Possession which the *Jews* have had of this Land is by no Means answerable, if the Thing itself were of Importance, to the Solemnity wherewith it is promised. They never had, not even in the Time of their greatest Prosperity, a full Possession of it, and scarce ever a *peaceable* one, even of that Part which they held. It is now considerably more than two thousand Years since nine Tribes and a half were carried into Captivity by the King of *Assyria*; and what has since befallen them, or whether they yet subsist *God* only knows. The Remainder of this People, after having suffered such Calamities, as no Nation besides

ever

ever felt, have been for more than sixteen Hundred Years dispersed over the Face of the whole Earth, an *Astonishment*, a *Proverb*, and a *By-word among the Nations*. So that instead of being the most happy People in the World, as they must have been, if the Covenant had respected their *temporal* Prosperity, they have been, of all Mankind, the most miserable.

And as a further Proof that the Covenant neither *has* nor *can* be fulfilled by conferring any temporal Advantages on the Posterity of the Patriarchs, it may be observed, that the Inheritance of the Land of *Canaan* is promised to the Patriarchs *themselves in Person*, as well as to their *Seed*. They therefore must in *Person* possess this Land after their Resurrection from the Dead, since, while they lived, God gave them *none Inheritance in it*, no not so much as to set their Foot on, as the holy Scriptures have observed (c) not without Reason.

There yet remains to be considered another Interpretation of the Covenant, namely, that by the promised Inheritance *Heaven* is to be understood. But this also appears

(c) *AA. vii. 5.*

pears to be without Foundation. (d) For
 the Land of *Canaan* is declared to be
 the future Inheritance of good Men with
 as much Plainness, as if the divine Historian
 had purposely designed to guard against
 any Possibility of mistaking it. As for
 Example, I will give unto thee the Land
 of *Canaan*, the Land which thou seest, the
 Land wherein thou art a Stranger, the Land
 whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and
 to thy Seed; nothing can be more clearly
 pointed out. Now if I must believe, after
 all, that *Heaven* is here intended, and that
 the Land of *Canaan*, thus particularly de-
 scribed, and distinguished, and promised by
 Almighty God, in the most solemn Manner,
 to *Abraham* and his Posterity, shall not be
 the Inheritance of these Men; I shall freely
 acknowledge, for my Part, that I know
 not what Certainty there can be in the holy
 Scriptures, interpreted in this arbitrary Man-
 ner. Human Writings may be understood,
 for the boldest Critick will not presume to
 treat them with such Licence; but the
 Writings of the inspired Penmen, even

(d) Because the Law is said to have a Shadow of good
 Things to come, many have been led to interpret the Co-
 venant which God made with *Abraham*, in a figurative Sense;
 and to suppose the Land of *Canaan* to be a Type of Heaven,
 but without any the least Authority.

when they record the solemn Covenant of God, which, one would think, ought to be plain and certain, do, it seems, speak of one thing and mean another quite opposite to it. For when they promise to good Men the Inheritance of the *Earth*, or of a *Part* of the *Earth*, named and particularized, you are, by Virtue of that Promise, to expect a Translation into *Heaven*.

There are a thousand other Passages in the Old Testament, wherein the Land of *Canaan* is spoken of, as the future Habitation of the Just: Consult the Prophets, and behold, with Surprize, how much they dwell upon this Subject; of *Heaven* there is no Mention: But why the *Land of Canaan* is so frequently spoken of, and *Heaven* not mentioned, if this latter were to be the Seat of *Christ's* Kingdom, I am at a Loss to know. In the *New Testament* also the promised Inheritance is still kept in View.

I shall mention two or three Passages to this Purpose. The Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, speaking of *Abraham's* Faith, chap. xi. tells us, as an Instance of it, that when he was called to go out into a Place which he should later receive for an Inheritance, he obeyed, tho' he knew not into what Country God intended to lead him; and that

even when God had brought him into the Land of Promise, into that Land which he should after receive for an Inheritance, there was still an Occasion offered him for the further Exercise of this Virtue, for he did not possess the Land of Canaan, at that time, as the Owner and Proprietor of it; But sojourned in it by Faith as in a strange Country, tho' it had been promised to him for an Inheritance, dwelling in Tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the Heirs with him of the same Promise. He sojourned in it, I say, by Faith, that is, in Expectation that God would not fail to make good his Promise hereafter, and to give him the Inheritance of it according to his Covenant; and thus the Apostle explains it in the 13th Verse: *These all died in Faith, not having received the Promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims, not in the Earth, as it is translated, but in the Land, even in that Land, which was promised to them for an Inheritance, and which therefore they shall inherit.*

In another Part of this Epistle, the Apostle having shewn that good Men were promised a Rest from the Beginning, correspondent to the original Sabbath, which has

not

not hitherto been enjoyed, for *Joskua*, says he, *gave them not this Rest*; concludes thus, *there remaineth therefore a Rest (a Sabbatism) to the People of God*: It is plain, that he is here speaking of a Sabbatism to be enjoyed in the Land of *Canaan*. And again, chap. 12, he fixes the Seat of that Happiness, which good Men shall hereafter enjoy, in the promised Land, figuratively describing this Happiness, tho' future, as already present: *Ye are come unto Mount Sion and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels, and to the general Assembly and Church of the first born, &c.* By the Church of the first born, those probably are meant, who shall arise first from the Dead. (e)

Since then it has been proved that the *Earth*, and, in particular, *the Land of Canaan*, shall be the future Inheritance of good Men, it will follow from hence, that the glorious Kingdom of *Christ* shall be established in the *Earth*. The following Passages, however, prove this Point more directly and immediately.

In the Fifth Chapter of the *Apocalypse*, 9 and 10 Verses, the Elders sing the Praises of *Christ*

(e) *Col. i. 18.*

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Christ in the following Words : *Thou art worthy to take the Book and to open the Seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, and hast made us unto our God Kings and Priests; and we shall reign upon Earth.* The same thing is also proved by the two following Passages of the Prophecy of *Daniel*. A magnificent Image appears to *Nebuchadnezzar* in a Dream, representing the four great Monarchies, and behold a Stone cut out without Hands, smites the Image, and destroys it utterly, so that it becomes like the Chaff upon the threshing Floor, and no Place is found for it : and the Stone which smote the Image increases to a great Mountain, so as to fill the whole Earth. This Stone, according to the Prophets Interpretation of the Dream, is that Kingdom which *the God of Heaven* was to set up in the Time of the fourth Monarchy ; or, in other Words, it is the Kingdom of *Christ*, which began at the precise Time marked out by the Prophet, and shall, according to this Prophecy, from a small Beginning prevail over all the Kingdoms of the Earth, and succeed in their Place ; consequently, it shall be an *earthly* Kingdom, even in it's triumphant State. This Passage is taken from the second Chapter of *Daniel* ; the other I proposed to mention,

mention, is in the seventh. The four Monarchies are there represented by four Beasts, and it is again foretold, that they shall be succeeded by the Kingdom of Christ: *These great Beasts which are four*, says an Angel, explaining the Vision to the Prophet, *are four Kings which shall arise out of the Earth. But the Saints of the most high shall take the Kingdom and possess the Kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. And the Kingdom and Dominion and the Greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven shall be given to the People of the Saints of the Most High, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all Dominions shall serve and obey him; that is, in the Words of another Prophet, (f) the Kingdoms of this World shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

But Daniel goes on to describe the glorious Appearance of Christ, when he cometh to take Possession of his Kingdom: *I saw in the Night Visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came with the Clouds of Heaven, and there was given him Dominion and Glory and a Kingdom. From this Passage, it is evident, that when Christ cometh in the Clouds of Heaven, he cometh to take Possession of his glorious Kingdom; at his first*
Advent

(f) Apoc. xi. 15.

Advent he appeared in the Form of a *Servant*, but now he cometh as a *King*, and in all the Majesty of Heaven to judge the World. 'Tis thus the Prophet describes him in the following Passage, *I beheld till the Thrones were placed or erected (not cast down, as it is in our Translation) viz. for Christ and his Assessors, and the antient of Days did sit, whose Garment was white as Snow, and the Hair of his Head like pure Wool. His Throne was like the fiery Flame, and his Wheels as burning Fire, a fiery Flame issued and came forth from before him, thousand Thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten Thousand stood before him. The Judgment was set and the Books were opened. Of this Kingdom, the Saints shall partake according to the following Text: I beheld till the antient of Days came, and Judgment was given to the Saints of the Most High, and the Time came that the Saints possessed the Kingdom, that is, the Saints shall possess the Kingdom by sitting on Thrones with Christ in Judgment; for to judge and to reign are the same Thing in effect. St. Paul accordingly tells us, 2 Tim. iv. 1. That the Lord Jesus shall judge the Quick and the Dead at his Appearing and his Kingdom. And our Lord speaks thus to his Disciples, Luk. xxii. 29. I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father bath*

hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my Table, in my Kingdom, and sit on Thrones judging the twelve Tribes of Israel. And St. *John*, *Apoc.* xx. 4. having described the Saints as sitting on Thrones with *Christ* in Judgment, adds, that they *lived* and *reigned* with *Christ* a thousand Years, for so long the Kingdom of *Christ* shall continue. Since then our *Lord's* glorious Kingdom commences at his Descent from Heaven to judge the World, it will follow, that it must needs be an *earthly* Kingdom, with respect to the Seat of it; and that his Reign shall be *personal*. It will follow likewise, since the Saints shall partake of this Kingdom, which shall continue a thousand Years, sitting on Thrones in Judgment, and eating and drinking with *Christ* in his Kingdom, as our *Lord* himself expresses it; it will follow, I say, that there must be a Resurrection of the Just, previous to the general Resurrection. And thus what St. *John* has expressly taught, is proved necessary from the Reason of the Thing.

Hitherto we have seen, in general, that the *Earth* shall be the Seat of *Christ's* Kingdom; but what Part of the Earth shall be the *chief* Seat or Metropolis of this Kingdom, we have not yet seen. This, however, is

not difficult to determine, for whoever considers, how much distinguished the Land of *Canaan* is throughout the whole Scripture, will naturally be led to conclude, that it shall be the chief Seat of *Christ's* Kingdom. *Jerusalem* is called, for Example, *the holy City, the City of the living God, the Place which he hath chosen, the Joy of the whole Earth, &c.* for which no tolerable Reason can be assigned from it's past Condition. The *Jerusalem that now is* being, as *St. Paul* speaks, *in Bondage with her Children, (g)* and having been for the most Part, a distressed and miserable Country; it is distinguished then on account of it's future Excellence, and because it shall become the *Metropolis* of *Christ's* Kingdom, for why else it should be distinguished I know not. But we are not left to form Conjectures in this Case, there being many Texts of Scripture which positively declare, that the *Lord* shall reign in *Jerusalem*, particularly these which follow: *Isaiab xxiv. 23. Then the Moon shall be confounded and the Sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and before his Ancients gloriously. Ezek. xlviii. 35. And the Name of the City from that Day shall be, The Lord is there. Zech.*

ii.

(g) *Gal. iv. 25:*

ii. 10. Sing and rejoice, O Daughter of Zion, for lo I come, and I will dwell in the Midst of thee, saith the Lord. Jer. iii. 17. At that Time they shall call Jerusalem the Throne of the Lord, and all the Nations shall be gathered unto it. Mic. iv. 7. And the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever. And Luk. i. 32, 33. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the Throne of his Father David: These Texts, to mention no more, sufficiently prove that the Throne of Christ shall be established at Jerusalem, as the Metropolis of his Kingdom.

It may be objected to the general Intention of this Discourse, that the Kingdom, which the Just are taught to expect, is sometimes stiled the Kingdom of Heaven, which implies, that the Seat of it shall be in Heaven. To this Objection, the Note of Father Simon on Mat. iii. 2. affords a very proper Answer. The Word *Heaven*, among the *Hebrews*, is sometimes put for *God*; and the Kingdom of *God* (or of *Heaven*) signifies here, and in many other Places, the happy Time of the *Messiah*; the Expression was well understood by the *Jews*, who were then in Expectation of that Kingdom,

dom, or, more properly, of that Reign. To which may be added, that the Kingdom of the *Messiah* was therefore stiled the Kingdom of *God* and of the *Heavens*, for so it ought to be translated, because it was to be set up by the *God of Heaven*, or because the *Heavens*, or *God*, shall then bear Rule. (b)

It may be further objected that no Part of the Earth, not even the Land of *Canaan*, can be a fit Place for the Enjoyment of such Happiness as the Kingdom of *Christ* implies. We know, by Experience, that the Pleasures of this World are empty and deceitful, and unworthy to be esteemed by wise Men, even in our present *degenerate* State. Can it be supposed then, that the Sons of the Resurrection, restored to the *Perfection* of their Nature, shall be brought again upon this idle Stage to act a *second* Part, tired as they have been in sustaining the *first*? This, it may be said, is an absurd Imagination, and we are therefore obliged to understand all those Texts of Scripture, which speak to this Purpose in a figurative Sense, To which I answer, that since *God* has expressly and solemnly promised the Land of *Canaan* to good

(b) See *Lightfoot* on the Place.

good Men, as an Inheritance, and has declared that the glorious Kingdom of *Christ* shall be there, we ought to conclude that it shall undergo some Change by the almighty Power of *God*, which may render it suitable to the Condition of it's future Inhabitants: And this doubtless is much more reasonable than to say, in Contradiction to the express Words of *God*, that we shall *not* receive this Inheritance, that it shall *not* be the Seat of *Christ's* Kingdom, or, by the boldest Change that ever was made in any Author, to understand Heaven for Earth. But to put this Matter beyond Dispute. The holy Scriptures declare, that there shall be a *Renovation* of the Earth, and of the Land of *Canaan* in particular; and that this *Renovation* shall take Place at the second Coming of *Christ*. In *St. Matt. xix. 28.* Our *Saviour* speaks thus to his Disciples: *Verily, I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the Regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit upon the Throne of his Glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.* (i) The Regeneration, you may see plainly,

(i) *Diodati's* Translation of this Text, frees it from that Ambiguity to which it is subject in our Translation: *Io vi dico in verità, che, nella nuova creazione, quando l' Figliuol dell'huomo sederà sopra'l trono della sua gloria, voi anchora*
che

plainly, shall be cotemporary with the glorious Kingdom of Christ, and of the Saints. St. Peter also assures us, that there shall be Times of refreshing and of the Restitution of all Things to their original State, for so the Word, which we translate *Restitution*, properly signifies, at the second Coming of Christ. And St. Paul in the viiith Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans teaches, that the whole Creation shall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption under which it now groaneth, and shall partake of the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God: And how reasonable and fit is this! that by the Obedience of Christ, the second Adam, the Loss sustained by the Disobedience of the first should be repaired; that the Earth, as it fell with Man should be restored with him; that there should be a Correspondence between the natural and the moral World, as well in their Renovation as their Corruption; that the Curse, in short, should be utterly reversed, and that God may again rejoice in his Works. (k)

che m'hapete seguitato federete sopra dodici troni, giudicando le dodici tribu d'Israel.

(k) Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the Face of the Earth. The Glory of the Lord shall endure for ever; the Lord shall rejoice in his Works. Psal. civ. 30, 31. N. B. The Jews prove both the Resurrection and the Renovation from this Passage.

If the Texts, last mentioned, speak of a *general* Renovation, there are others which relate *particularly* to the Renovation of the Land of *Canaan*, which shall become a *Paradise*: *The Lord shall comfort Zion, says the Prophet Isaiah, he shall comfort all her waste Places, and he will make her Wilderness like Eden, and her Desert like the Garden of the Lord. Joy and Gladness shall be found therein, Thanksgiving and the Voice of Melody.* It would be endless to repeat all that is said upon this Subject; I shall therefore, only observe, in brief, that the *New Jerusalem*, or, to use the *Jewish* Expression, the *Jerusalem of the Age to come*, that is, of the Age of the *Messiah*, shall resemble the original *Paradise* in the following Particulars: It shall be *enlightened* by the *Glory of God*, *Rev. xxi. 23.* It shall be *watered* by a *River*, *Zech. xiv. 8.* and *Rev. xxii. 1.* The *Tree of Life* shall be planted in it, *Rev. xxii. 2.* The *Inhabitants* of it shall be *all righteous*, *Rev. xxi. 27.* and *Isa. lii. 1, 60, 27.* They shall be *free* from all *Infirmities*, and from *Pain*, and *Sorrow*, and *Death*, *Isa. xxxv. 5.* and *Rev. xxi. 4.* And, what is exceedingly remarkable, *St. John* adds, *Rev. xxii. 3. That there shall be no more Curse.*

Divines,

Divines, when they would describe the Happiness of the Kingdom of God, borrow their Expressions from the Description which the Prophets give of the *New Jerusalem*; and so far they are in the Right. But they are mistaken, in supposing that the *Earth* shall not be the Seat of this Happiness. For, not to insist upon what has been said in the former Part of this Discourse, if you consider the Texts last quoted, you may perceive that there is scarce one of them, that can, with any Propriety, be applied to *Heaven*; they do not relate to a Place which has been *always* happy, but to one that shall *hereafter* become so. And, if this Matter stood in Need of any further Proof, the two following Passages, from chap. xxi. of the *Revelations*, would put it, as I conceive, beyond Dispute: *I saw*, says St. *John*, v. 2. *the holy City, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband. And I heard a Voice out of Heaven, saying, behold the Tabernacle of God is with Men, and he will dwell with them and be their God; and God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, &c.*

(1) And in the 23d Verse he says, *The Nations*

(1) It appears from the *Hebrews*, xi. 16. that the Patriarchs were made acquainted with the future State of *Jerusalem*

tions of them which are saved shall walk in the Light of it, viz. of the New Jerusalem, and the Kings of the Earth do bring their Glory and Honour into it.

Having thus proved, as I flatter myself, from the Reason of the Thing, that the Earth shall be the Seat of that Happiness which Mankind are to enjoy hereafter; and that the holy Scriptures declare the same Thing in express Words, teaching us, that the Earth shall be the future Inheritance of the Meek; and that the Kingdom of God shall prevail and extend itself throughout the whole World; that there shall be, at the same Time, an Agreement between the natural and the moral World, a Regeneration; a Deliverance of the Creation from the Bondage of Corruption, and a Restoration of all things to their original Perfection; and that the Land of Canaan, in particular, shall become a Paradise in the renewed Earth, being the Metropolis of Christ's Kingdom, which things do mutually infer and support each other, I shall now recount a few Particulars, relating to these blessed Times, as

G briefly

Jerusalem and the Land of Canaan: Jacob perhaps beheld their Glory in a Vision, when he slept at Bethel. Consider that Passage.

briefly as may be, and almost in the very Words of the holy Scriptures.

In the Fulness of Time, *Christ* shall descend from Heaven, accompanied by Angels, in the *Glory* of his *Father*; and shall sit upon the Throne of his *Glory*. At his coming, they that are *Christ's* shall arise from the Dead, for the Dead in *Christ* shall rise first, every one in his own Order, that is, as *Tertullian* explains it, (m) sooner or later, in Proportion to their Deserts; and having been *first* judged, for Judgment must begin with the House of God, they also shall partake of the Kingdom, sitting upon Thrones with *Christ* in Judgment, and rejoicing together in the *New Jerusalem*, which is the Paradise of God, with *Christ*, the Patriarchs and the Prophets. (n) For at this Time the solemn Covenant of God shall receive it's Accomplishment; and perhaps the virtuous Part of the *Jewish Nation* shall then enjoy some peculiar Advantages.

This Resurrection of the Saints, is called by *St. John*, the *first* Resurrection, it is stiled by our blessed Lord emphatically the Resurrection

(m) Lib. III. adversus Marcionem, Cap. iv.

(n) Justin Martyr Dial. cum Tryphone.

rection of the *Just*, and to this it is probable
St. *Paul* alludes in the following Words,
others were tortured not accepting Deliverance,
that they might obtain a better Resurrec-
tion. (o)

St. *John* informs us, that this blessed and
glorious Reign of *Christ* shall continue a
thousand Years, during which Time *Satan*
shall be bound, and Peace, and Happiness,
and Christian Knowledge shall prevail over
the whole Earth. At the End of that Period
the rest of the Dead shall live, the general
Judgment shall succeed, the Destruction of
wicked Men and Angels, (p) and the Con-
flagration of the World; whereby the
Heavens being on Fire shall be dissolved, and
the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat.
Nevertheless, we, according to the Promise
of *God*, look for new Heavens and a new
Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness.

Christ having thus finished his mediatorial
Office, and reigned till he hath put down all
Rule, and all Authority and Power, shall
then deliver up the Kingdom to *God*, even
the Father, (an evident Proof, by the Way,
that

(o) *Hab. xi. 35.*

(p) *2 Pet. iii. 7.*

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that his glorious Kingdom must precede the
Conflagration) that God may be all in all.
Thus shall all Things end in a State per-
fectly angelical, and in Happiness unchange-
able and everlasting. (6)

This, as far as I can judge, and as far as
I am capable of explaining it, in so short a
Compass, is the Sum of what the holy
Scriptures teach concerning the glorious
Kingdom of Christ and his Saints. I have
been obliged, for Fear of being too prolix,
to omit many Scriptural Passages relating
to the Subject, as also all human Testimonies.
Though it were easy, I think, to shew, that
there are some Footsteps left of an ancient
Tradition to our Purpose in almost all Parts
of the World, that it has been the constant
Opinion of the Jews, from Abraham down
to the present Time; and that for three
hundred Years it was the Belief of all Or-
thodox Christians, it having fallen into Dis-
credit about the Beginning of the fourth
Century, at which Time, as Protestants well
know, some other Changes were made in
the Doctrine of Christ.
I am also forced to omit an Apology,
which I, a Person of no Name or Di-
stinction, ought, perhaps, to make, for
attempting

attempting to revive an Opinion which has been so long neglected. I shall only say upon this Occasion, that I have been wholly influenced, if I know my own Heart, by a sincere Desire to promote the Truth, and that if any one, who may think I have judged amiss, shall endeavour to shew me the Mistake he supposes me to be under, in the Spirit of *Charity* and *Moderation*, which is the Spirit of the Gospel, I shall accept his Endeavours in good Part, whether his Arguments convince me or not.

I shall conclude, with the following practical Observation: That whatever the Kingdom of *Christ* means and wherever the Seat of it shall be, the holy Scriptures declare always, and with an undoubted Clearness, *that none shall enter into it but the holy and undefiled. Blessed are they (and they only) who do his Commandments, that they may have a Right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the Gates into the City*—It concerns us all therefore, so to order the Course of our Lives in Righteousness and Virtue, that we may be accounted worthy of *that World and the Resurrection from the Dead*, and enjoy, through the Merits and Mediation of *Christ*, that Happiness which is prepared

prepared for them that love him, surpassing
all that Eye hath seen, or Ear heard, or
hath entered into the Heart of Man to con-
ceive. (q)

(q) *Isa. liiv. 4.* Consider this Passage together with the
Context, and see whether it does not relate to a State of
Happiness upon Earth, to be enjoyed at the Coming of our
Lord.



I shall conclude with the following
Blessed Observation: That whatever the
Kingdom of God is, and wherever the
Seat of it shall be, the Holy Scriptures de-
clare always, and with an undoubted Clari-
ty, that none shall enter into it but the holy
and undissolved. Blessed are they (and they only)
who do his Commandments, that they may have
a Right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in
through the Gates into the City.—It concerns
us all therefore, to order the Course of
our Lives in Righteousness and Virtue, that
we may be accounted worthy of that Word
and the Admission from the Door, and
enjoy, through the Blessings and Medi-
ation of Christ, that Happiness which is
prepared